Allocation of mines

*355. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a committee of State Government of Jharkhand had recommended 2500 hectares of Ankura Mines to Tata Steel Ltd. (TSL) for prospecting;

(b) whether it is also a fact that subsequently, the State Government had recommended a major portion of Ankura Mines to JSW Steel and leftover was allotted to TSL;

(c) if so, the reasons for reducing the share of TSL in Ankura Mines against the committee's recommendations; and

(d) the reasons for granting prospecting license (PL) and mining lease (ML) to JSW by the State Government in violation of the committee's recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (d) The Government of Jharkhand had, *vide* their letter No. Kh.Ni.(Chai-)-51/2006/95/MC dated 31.05.07, recommended a proposal for prior approval of the Central Government under Section 5 (1) of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) (MMDR) Act, 1957 for grant of prospecting licence for Iron Ore in favour of M/s. JSW Steel Limited over an area of 1388.50 hectares in Mauza Ankua (Reserved Forest), District West Singhbhum. Prior approval of the Central Government was granted *vide* letter No. 5/92/2007-M.IV dated 17.09.2007.

The Government of Jharkhand, *vide* their letter No. 1412/M dated 30.10.2007, also recommended a proposal for prior approval of the Central Government under Section 5 (1) of the MMDR Act, 1957 for grant of prospecting licence for Iron Ore in favour of M/s. Tata Steel Limited over an area of 1808.00 hectares in Mauza Ankua (Reserved Forest), District West Singhbhum. Prior approval of the Central Government was granted *vide* letter No. 5/191/2007-M.IV dated 16.04.2008.

The State Government, *vide* their letter No. Kh.Ni.(Chaiba)-06/2008/835/M dated 27.6.08 further recommended a proposal for prior approval of the Central Government under Section 5 (1) of the MMDR Act, 1957 for grant of mining lease for iron ore and manganese ore over an area of 999.90 hectares in Ankua (Reserved Forest), District West Singhbhum in favour of M/s. JSW Steel Limited. Prior approval of the Central Government was granted *vide* letter No. 5/108/2008-M.IV dated 5.9.2008 as M/s. JSW Steel Limited enjoyed preferential right under section 11 (1) of the MMDR Act, 1957, since the area was part of the area of 1388.50 hectares prospected by the Company.

While recommending the proposals for prospecting licence, the State Government mentioned that it had received 23 applications over the area. The State Government stated that it gave hearing to the applicants, and keeping in view the Industrial Policy of the State Government and in the interest of systematic and scientific mining in the State, was recommending the applications of M/s Tata Steel Ltd and M/s JSW Steel Limited for prior approval for grant of prospecting licence.